

HB 602 with HCA 1 -- USE OF FORCE BY LAW ENFORCEMENT

SPONSOR: Pierson

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Standing Committee on Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill requires that when a law enforcement officer uses deadly force against an unarmed individual, who is 20 feet or more from the officer, thereby posing no imminent danger to the officer, the officer must be immediately suspended and removed from duty, without pay, until a full investigation of the incident has been completed.

HCA 1: The amendment states that an officer is justified in using deadly force when a suspect has committed or attempted to commit a felony, is attempting to escape, and poses a risk of inflicting serious physical injury to others. It removes the provisions regarding the use of force against an unarmed person at least 20 feet away.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill will create a clear standard for use of force by law enforcement and help rebuild trust between police officers and the community. It will send a clear message that life is sacred and precious.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Pierson; Pamela J. Meanes, National Bar Association; Clyde L. Williams, NAACP Missouri Conference of Branches; and Mid-Missouri Fellowship Of Reconciliation.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.